

A Season of Reflection

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

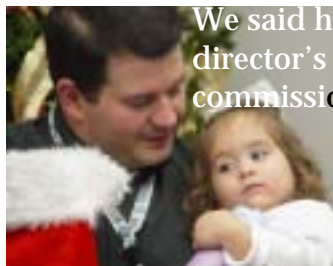
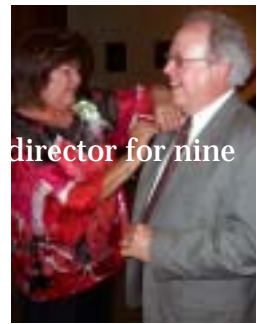
-- King Solomon

Traditionally, the Christmas season is a time to look back and ponder the year that is about to pass. It is a time to count blessings, to track milestones achieved, to celebrate successes, to assess progress made. As we turn the last few pages on the chapter that is 2005, we in the Department of Workforce Education have much to reflect on. For us, this year has been . . .

A *Time of Transition*

We said goodbye to Dr. Steve Franks, who had been DWE's director for nine years.

We worked with George French, who shouldered the extra duties of the director until a new director was appointed.



We said hello to John Wyvill who stepped into the director's position after serving six years as commissioner of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

And we welcomed Bob Trevino, who had worked in the governor's office, as the new commissioner at ARS.



Many of our sections faced transitions as familiar faces left the agency and new ones joined our team. Some offices relocated; others consolidated.

The transitions were not limited to personnel and facilities.

- ♦ Federal Surplus Property took on new programs, such as the law enforcement surplus property.
- ♦ Administration of Fayetteville West Campus Technical Center transferred to Northwest Arkansas Community College.
- ♦ A new secondary area technical center opened in Blytheville.
- ♦ And the Phillips Community College Career and Technical Center expanded to serve students in south Arkansas County and Phillips County.

Time to Meet Challenges

When Hurricane Katrina dealt a death blow to the Gulf Coast, our agency rose to the challenge. FFA opened Camp Couchdale to house hundreds of evacuees. Many of our classes and student organizations conducted food drives and fund raisers to help the hurricane victims. ARS, adult education, the Governor's Dislocated Workers Task Force, and FSP offered their services. For all of DWE, it was a time to reach out and help a neighbor.

Other challenges arose in the course of doing our job.

- ♦ Arkansas' criminal justice instructors were charged with developing an assessment tool to be used for national certification of programs in the Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security Career Cluster.
- ♦ Many of our career and technical teachers were challenged to get industry certification in their fields. More than 50 instructors completed CareerSafe OSHA Train-the-Trainer safety workshops so they can teach safety courses to their students and local industry.
- ♦ Through a partnership with the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, Cisco Systems, and Pulaski Technical College, our computer engineering courses were certified to use Hewlett Packard's IT Essentials Web-based curriculum, assessment, and student performance tracking.
- ♦ Several business teachers took the tests to be IC³ and MOS certified.
- ♦ The challenges also extended to the students with Web design students at Siloam Springs High School being certified as Internet webmasters.
- ♦ And in adult education, the challenge was implementing a new data management information system. The staff did so well that its manual for the system is serving as a model for other states.

Time to Shine

In meeting the daily challenges of our mission, DWE staff and clients put on stellar performances.

- ♦ The Adult Education Section exceeded all of its core indicators of performance.
- ♦ Nearly 6,700 Arkansans passed the GED tests with a pass rate of 84 percent – compared with a national pass rate of 64 percent. Arkansas is the only state that offers the GED tests free to its residents. (Following Katrina, the Adult Education Section extended this free offer to evacuees in the state.)
- ♦ ARS met five of its six performance indicators, missing the final one by .03 of a percent.
- ♦ The DWE communications office took the lead in a multi-agency project to produce *Go Back. Move Forward*, the first statewide adult education resource guide.
- ♦ The State Approving Agency for Veterans hosted the Southern Region Association Conference.

A Time to Prepare for the Future

Facing a potential loss of leadership due to the pending retirement of several senior managers, ARS implemented a Leadership Training Class to prepare for the future. Nearly 40 ARS staff members took advantage of this course to expand their leadership and management skills.

In another forward-looking effort, ARS developed Vision 2010, a long-range strategic plan to improve client service and reinforce the values and goals of the agency.

A Time to Celebrate

In the midst of the transitions, the challenges, and the preparations, all of us at DWE found time to celebrate, to laugh, to take pride in our work.



***Happy Holidays
& thank you
for a job well done!***

